

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY  
GOVERNOR



VI. #3c

VICTORIA WHITMORE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD**

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**MEMO**

DATE: 2/10/2017  
TO: Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board  
FROM: Victoria Whitmore, ED  
RE: **Nancy Bischof, DVM – License Renewal – Report of civil infraction**

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- Dr. Bischof reported a civil infraction from the Michigan Dept. of Agriculture regarding the running of an unregistered animal shelter. She was required to perform community service and pay court fees, including a \$450 fine.
- This is not a criminal matter and may not have needed to be disclosed under ARS 32-3208, which requires the reporting of felonies and certain misdemeanor charges.

2/2017

Via fax received  
11/3/10 #R

19-28

Events leading up to the surrender of my Michigan veterinary license.

From 2001 to 2016 I served as President of The Cat Project, a sanctuary for cats in Shiawassee County, Michigan. The sanctuary was housed on an 11.66 acre farm that I owned in a rural area 5 miles from the town of Perry and over ¼ mile from any other houses.

The Cat Project employed 3-5 part-time care takers to care for approximately 124 cats. In addition I spent one week every month living at the Sanctuary from November, 2013 until August, 2016. Prior to November, 2013 I lived at the sanctuary full time. Throughout this time the sanctuary was visited by representatives of both Shiawassee County Animal Control and the Michigan Department of Agriculture. No complaints were ever made about the care or housing of the cats. In 2012 the Shiawassee County Animal Control Officer told me I did not need a kennel license for cats, and even asked me if I would be willing to take in cats for the county as they did not have an operating shelter any longer.

The sanctuary met or exceeded the recommended space allotment for long term housing of cats described as a minimum of 19 sq ft per cat by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program. The cats were housed in 3 buildings, a three bedroom 1500 sq ft house, a converted 2 ½ car two story garage with an upstairs bonus room and outdoor enclosure and an enclosed area with a loft in the barn. The cats were free fed Purina One dry food and received canned food every evening. Most health problems were addressed through the team of our house call veterinarian, Dr. Laura Pylman, myself, and our licensed veterinary technician Jodi Hodyka, who worked at the sanctuary from 2011 to 2016. If cats needed additional veterinary care we had support from Dr. Hector Alfonso, owner of Okemos Animal Hospital.

Approximately 72% of the cats in the sanctuary were feral, over 10 years old or had chronic health problems. An additional 22% of the cats were between the ages of 5 and 10 years, only 6% of the cats were less than 5 years of age and friendly (therefore in the adoptable category). Many of the cats lived at the sanctuary for the majority of their lives.

On April 11, 2016 Christine Bishop moved into the sanctuary to care for the cats in exchange for a place to live. Allowing Christine to live at the sanctuary was a decision made by myself and board member Barb Craig.

Unfortunately Ms. Bishop started sowing her seeds of discontent within 48 hours of her arrival. Although we were not aware of it at the time, Ms. Bishop began using social media to make misleading statements and even outright lies about the sanctuary, as well as statements designed to destroy my reputation. Although Ms. Bishop was one of the people tasked with cleaning and caring for the cats, she regularly posted that the sanctuary was filthy and the cats were sick. Neither were true, however anyone with common sense would see that if it was true she was responsible as the live in caretaker.

On April 12, 2016 Shiawassee County Animal Control Officer Kirt Stechschulte came for a walk through of my sanctuary with me. He took videos and said everything was fine. In May, 2016 the county building inspector came to the sanctuary to inspect the new electrical work and hot water heater. He had no complaints about the house.

On June 23, 2016 I gave Ms. Bishop the 2 months notice she requested to move out of my home. I was approved for a transfer from Banfield in North Scottsdale to Banfield in Southfield, Michigan and planned to move back to the sanctuary permanently. My start date for the new job was August 15.

On June 30, 2016 Ms. Bishop was told by her probation officer that she could NOT live at the sanctuary without violating her probation. She then lied with the sanctuary manager Michele Pursley saying that she didn't actually live there.

In mid-July Ms. Bishop turned off the web cam that we had running at the sanctuary. She refused to turn it back on regardless of how many times she was asked. In addition board member Barb Craig and I became aware of the misleading comments, falsehoods and outright lies Ms. Bishop was posting on social media at this time so I stopped her internet service.

On July 25, 2016 ACO Stechschulte called me because the Sheriff's office was receiving complaints from people who saw Ms. Bishop's posts. As we discussed the allegations he told me that he didn't want to go out to the sanctuary as he had just been out there (April 12). He decided to go visit the sanctuary and told me he would go July 27. I asked him to call me if he found any problems. He did not call me. See Appendix A.

On August 2, 2016, ACO Stechschulte called me again regarding my rabbit Cottontail. During this conversation he told me that my manager Michele Pursley was not willing to continue feeding or caring for my cats.

This was a surprise to me, but I immediately made arrangements to leave my job with Banfield and fly home to the sanctuary. I arrived on August 3, 2016.

On August 3, 2016, Jodi Hodyka, Barb Craig and Cathy Putman cared for the cats. None of these three women were ever interviewed by the ACO even though Jodi continued to help me care for the cats until they were taken. In addition I discovered a pink tag on my front door saying that my house was unsafe to live in.

Based on the amount of laundry I did over the next 8 days, it appeared that Ms. Bishop and Ms. Pursley had not done any cleaning during July. Ms. Pursley had been my manager for almost 3 years and had worked for me over 4 years, I was extremely surprised she would treat the cats so badly.

On August 4, 2016 I called both ACO Stechschulte and David Chrenka, the building inspector, to find out what was going on, as this pink tag was dated August 1, 2016 and no one had called to tell me it was there. Neither party returned my phone calls.

On August 8 Mr. Chrenka returned my call and spoke with my mother Karen Rude and a friend, Rev. Christine Crugher-Jones regarding the tag on my house. Mr. Chrenka agreed to put in writing what I needed to do to have the tag removed from my house. None of the complaints Mr. Chrenka made regarding my house made the structure unsafe, and many turned out to be completely false allegations, including electrical problems. See Appendix B

On August 9 I met with the ACO. We spent 45 minutes standing in the converted garage which housed approximately 60 of the cats. During that time the cats were napping and not one cat even sneezed. The ACO asked me if I would permit an independent veterinarian to visit the sanctuary and I said that would be fine. He never contacted me to set up the visit.

Sometime during the first week of August the ACO went to Pylman Farms to check on my horse Cheyanne. Dr. Pylman told the ACO Cheyanne was out back and she had not done anything with him. The ACO told Dr. Pylman that everything at my sanctuary was fine, there were no problems.

August 19, 2016 Six cats were stolen from inside my house by Heather Inman. Ms. Inman was given the door code by one of my ex-employees, likely Ms. Bishop or Ms. Pursley. See Appendix C

August 23 The ACO stopped by my sanctuary because he was receiving phone calls that there was a trailer at my house and I was loading cats onto it. In fact this was a dumpster that was delivered for the roof tear off. The ACO

complained about all the people calling him. At that time I was having problems with trespassers and drive-bys multiple times a day. My cat Bones was stolen that evening. In addition there were several death threats against me on social media although I did not know it at the time.

August 24 I was in my home cleaning when a Shiawassee County Sheriff's deputy knocked on my door and told me I had to immediately leave my house while they execute a search warrant. My cats were seized by Shiawassee County officials. The Under Sheriff introduced himself, shook my hand, then walked out to the press gathering on the road and told them that I had abandoned my cats!

Included in the 113 cats and 4 kittens seized was my stolen cat Bones, meaning one of the people who trespassed on my property and stole Bones was present at the execution of the search warrant. My cats were trapped over 10 hours on this day. One of my feral cats was almost killed by an official wielding a Snappy Snare. I found dozens of broken claws the next day. Ken Palmer, a reporter for the Lansing State Journal, later told me he knew this was not an ordinary case of hoarding as the cats were crying and meowing so loudly.

The cats were transported to the Capitol Area Humane Society (CAHS) for exams, then either to Eaton County Humane Society (ECHS) or Shiawassee County Humane Society (SCHS), although most (70) stayed at CAHS. Interestingly, we later discovered all but 1 of the stolen cats at CAHS being housed with my seized cats. Shiawassee County officials were not aware that CAHS was in possession of the stolen cats.

The county did nothing for over 3 weeks until September 15 when they finally met with my attorney. They said there would be no neglect or cruelty charges filed against me. There was discussion of resolving the situation and I expressed my desire to move my cats to a ranch in Snowflake, AZ that had been offered to me for the cats' sanctuary at no cost. I was convinced I would never be safe in my home again as Heather Inman, a local resident, had publicly expressed a wish to torture me and that she wants to kill people like me, and I suspected there were others with this sentiment.

The county scheduled a hearing regarding the disposition of my cats. The hearing took place on October 25, eight weeks after the cats were seized. The judge ruled that the cats would remain in their present locations. By that time two of my cats had passed away and the rest were suffering terribly. I

was able to document this on September 30 and again October 26.

The housing my cats were subjected to at SCHS and CAHS was far below published standards for long term housing of cats. (Long term housing of cats is considered longer than 2 weeks.) Many of my cats were sick by this time, and cats at SCHS received no veterinary care. Dr. Hector Alfonso, a supporter who had cared for several of the sanctuary cats called to volunteer his services to SCHS to care for my cats. They did not even return his phone call.

Although my attorney filed a motion to stop the county from disposing of my cats, the judge denied the motion and my cats were transferred from Shiawassee County to various Humane Societies. Ken Palmer later told me that 9 of my cats died or were euthanized. This included Scabbers, a cat I accepted from a hoarding situation in Flint. Scabbers came to me emaciated, missing fur from his entire rear and leaking diarrhea. He had inflammatory bowel disease and flea allergy dermatitis. I have a facebook photo of Scabbers kissing Muffin about a year after his arrival. You can see that he has all his fur and is slightly overweight. He was happy and healthy at my sanctuary. When I visited him on October 26 at SCHS he was emaciated and caked in diarrhea. Although Jodi Hodyka offered to adopt Scabbers, ACO Stechschulte would not allow her to adopt him. Scabbers was killed at SCHS.

The Director of CAHS, Julia Wilson, publicly stated that my cats had fleas, ear mites and other health issues. A careful examination of the records provided by CAHS to Shiawassee County showed that the exams were mostly done by a licensed veterinary technician, and no ear swabs were recorded. The cats may have had ear infections, but mites weren't likely. I compiled data from the records and can show that the fleas on the 15 cats that had fleas came from carriers provided by the Humane Societies or their facilities. Our cats had been treated with Advantage Multi monthly, thus were extremely unlikely to have fleas or ear mites. No fleas were ever seen by myself or anyone else on my property after the cats were seized. Flea biology makes it next to impossible that my cats had fleas when they lived at the sanctuary.

Ms. Wilson also complained about the cost of treating my cats. Records show that in the first month CAHS spent \$189.69 on actual medical treatment for my cats. An additional \$1,814.62 was spent on testing and vaccinating my cats, things that they wouldn't have needed to do had they been willing to

let me identify the cats by name and match them with their health records.

Compilation of the records from CAHS showed that only 96 of my cats even received exams, and many exams were 2-3 days after the cats were seized. What about the other 28 cats and kittens? Of these 96 cats, only 7 were diagnosed with upper respiratory infections, despite the stress they were put through when seized. One of these was Lila Bean, a cat with chronic URI that was worse when I saw her 8 weeks later in quarantine at CAHS. Another cat, Scooby, never had a URI until he was seized.

I was charged with several violations of Michigan Department of Agriculture statutes. I pled guilty only to operating a kennel without a license. The charge was deferred and after 90 days it was removed from my record. At the time of the charges, December, 2016, I was unemployed, having lost my job at Banfield due to the stress of the situation I was in. I intended to return to Arizona and had no plans to live or work in Michigan again. I did not inform the Michigan Veterinary Board of what had transpired for these reasons. Later, on January 30, 2017, when I decided to renew my Michigan veterinary license, I misunderstood or overlooked the section of the license renewal pertaining to legal actions.

In June, 2017 I spoke with a representative of the Michigan Veterinary Board regarding what had been done to my cats. I was extremely surprised to receive correspondence from them regarding my veterinary license in October, 2017.

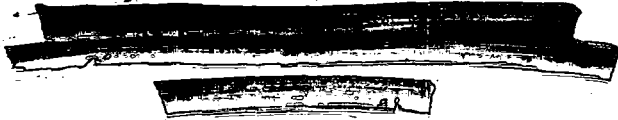
Rather than pay \$10,000 in attorneys fees to try and clear my name in a hearing with the veterinary board I surrendered my Michigan license as I do not plan to ever live or work there again.

Please contact me if you would like additional documents or clarification of the series of events.

Sincerely,

Ivory Lynn Wildflower DVM MPH

Nancy L. Bischof DVM MPH



Attorney Andrew Abood  
Abood Law Firm  
Via fax  
10-12-16

Dear Andrew,

The incident report has so many factual errors and omissions that my response is going to be as long as the report. The information in the report has lead me to believe that Animal Control Officer Kirt Stechshulte knowingly allowed my cats to live in unsafe, unsanitary circumstances, (the same thing I am accused of). Had he called me July 25 or 26 as I asked him to do (see attached email) I would have returned home no later than July 29 to deal with the problems created by Christine Bishop and Michele Pursley, the employees who actually harmed my cats.

I feel strongly that had the ACO contacted me, instead of covering up his investigation, that much of the suffering my cats and I have endured might have been avoided, not to mention the expense.

In the report the ACO indicates his plan to call the building inspector. Is it not reasonable that I be informed of this and their subsequent actions? The house was tagged on August 1, while Christine Bishop was still living in it. (Christine Bishop had been told by her probation officer in June that she was not allowed to live at the sanctuary, Michele Pursley lied to the probation officer and said Christine lived with her in Haslett. Michele freely admitted that to several people.)

Both Michele Pursley and Jodi Hodyka were adamant in telling me that the ACO and the building inspector both said they would inform me that the house was tagged. Neither did. Two people requested information regarding the violations of the building code from Mr. Chrenka on my behalf, on August 8, a full week after he tagged the house. Mr. Chrenka said he would need to put them in writing as he had not yet done so!!

Mr. Chrenka told Rev. Christine Crugher-Jones that he would not have tagged the house if he was not asked to by the ACO. The ACO asked me about the lights flickering in the kitchen during our Aug. 9 meeting. I said



they had flickered like that for 15 years. I didn't pursue it and he did not make any other mention of the house or it being tagged. Later I removed the burnt out compact fluorescent light bulb that was causing the flickering and it stopped.

I will try to have the remainder of my comments to you tomorrow. In the ACO's investigation he did not interview my primary sanctuary caretaker Jodi Hodyka, or board member Barbara Craig, even though we discussed them in the August 9 meeting. He did not even ask for their contact information. The people below would have given the ACO a much different picture of the sanctuary and the personality/demeanor of Michele Pursley and Christine Bishop had he interviewed them.

Jodi Hodyka

Barb Craig

Jenny Kurz

Jo McKenzie

Harley Koept

Last but not least, since the ACO appears to have made up his mind about me without all the facts, the paragraph about a hoarding disorder is not an original thought on his part. It is straight off the facebook posts from Christine Bishop. Attorney Troy Clarke has screen shots of as many of these as Barb Craig was able to find.

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

*Nancy L. Bischof DVM MPH*

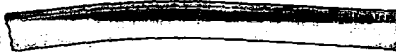
Nancy L. Bischof DVM MPH



OFFICE  
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October 16, 2016

David Chrenka  
Building Inspector Shiawassee County  
201 N. Shiawassee St.  
Corunna, MI 48817



Dear David,

We spoke 9/13/16 in regards to Nancy Bischof and her property at [REDACTED] Nancy called me out to this property because of the County's letter of unsafe structure and the requirement for Electrical System Evaluation after the roof repair had been completed. Her blinking kitchen lights were due to defective fluorescent lamps with in the fixtures. New fixtures have been purchased and will be installed once the drywall repair is complete in the kitchen. Some wiring was replaced due to mice damage of the outer insulation (the conductors themselves were still insulated.) I replaced a worn receptacle in one of the bedrooms, supported and put on junction box covers where needed and replaced two other light fixtures that were not insulation rated. I did not inspect the barns.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Monica Murray

Maximo Contracting LLC.

**Willingham  
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October 5, 2016

**VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED  
AND VIA FAX TO 517-625-2560**

Capital Area Humane Society  
ATTN: Julia Willson  
7095 West Grand River Avenue  
Lansing, MI 48906

Dear Ms. Willson,


It has come to my attention that the Capital Area Humane Society is currently in possession of six of my client Nancy Bischof's cats that were taken by an unknown individual or individuals from her property on August 19 and August 23. It is my further understanding that, sometime thereafter, an individual or individuals turned the cats over to your care. Please be advised that the cats were taken from Ms. Bischof's property without her permission or knowledge.

Accordingly, my client hereby demands the immediate return of the cats to her care. The cats are described as follows:

- Moonshadow – large dilute tortoiseshell, 8 years old, female
- Lakota – small tiger, 11 years old, female
- Marsh – white with black, 6 years old, male
- Alex – very large tiger and white, 5-6 years old, male
- Katie Kat – small tiger with white, 7 years old, female
- Bones – calico, back legs were previously amputated, 6 years old, female

Please contact me immediately to make arrangements for the return of the cats to Nancy Bischof. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,  
WILLINGHAM & COTE, P.C.

  
Troy D. Clarke